The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accents and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor countries in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Thru Payroll Savings

WHOLE NO. 1813 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 1946 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 36, NO. 2

New Wage Board Appointed As NWLB Ceases To Exist

Stabilization Agency To Pass on Pay Boosts and Prices

Washington, D. C.—President Truman issued an executive order terminating the National War Labor Board and creating a National Wage Stabilization Board to pick up the tangled threads left by the former body.

The President named the following members to take over:

Public—W. Willard Wirtz, former general counsel of the WLB, and Sylvester Garrett, former chairman of the Philadelphia Regional Board.

Labor—Robert J. Watt of the American Federation of Labor and Carl J. Shipley of the CIO.

Industry—Earl Cannon, vice president of the American Trucking Association, and R. Randall Irwin, assistant to the president of the Lockheed Aviation Corporation.

Mr. Wirtz, who was named chairman of the board, said it would soon make public detailed standards applying to conditions under which wages may be increased or decreased in accordance with government stabilization policy.

The board will determine whether wage increases requested may be used as a basis for seeking price relief. One branch of the board will continue to administer controls over wage adjustments in the building industry which also continue to require advance approval.

The new agency has no authority to settle any labor-management disputes.

President Truman accepted the resignation of 21 men who have served with the WLB, and in doing so, wrote chairman Garrison a letter of appreciation for their services and for the whole personnel of the WLB. The Chief Executive extended his "thanks for the outstanding wartime job they have done in the last 4 years, under the most difficult circumstances, in helping to maintain industrial peace, maximum production and wage stabilization."

He said that the board members and the WLB personnel had "served and thoroughly deserve the gratitude of their fellow-citizens."

Chairman Garrison also praised the record of the WLB in a report to the President.

"The board has had its shortcomings," he readily admitted. "It has made mistakes. Its tripartite procedures have been at times unnecessarily slow. He added:

"But all things considered, I submit to you, Mr. President, that the board has served the country well and that from its experiments much has been gained and much can be learned."

At a news conference, Mr. Garrison revealed that the board had a record of dealing with nearly 20,000 disputes.

Mr. Garrison said that before V-J Day the body had disposed of 17,807 disputes involving about 12,300,000 workers.

On V-J Day there were pending 3,043 disputes, most of which were disposed of before the WLB closed up shop.

"With very few exceptions, employers and unions voluntarily complied with the board's decisions and vigorously supported the wartime no-strike, no lockout agreement on whose foundation the board was set up," Mr. Garrison said.

Shipyard Unions Press Pay Case

Washington, D. C.—Leaders of organized labor in the shipbuilding industry met with top administration officials and demanded that the government carry out its solemn pledge to preserve the "real" wages of 750,000 shipyard workers.

The parley is an aftermath of the national shipbuilding wage conference which ended in a deadlock at Colorado Springs, Colo., after 2 weeks of negotiations. West Coast shipyard owners at the Colorado Springs confab declared their willingness to "talk business" on a wage increase, but most managements from other areas refused to go along.

President John P. Frey of the AFL Metal Trades Department, stressed the fact that the government, by virtue of past promises, has a binding obligation to see that the shipyard employes get a square deal now.

He pointed out that since April 1, 1941, these employes received an increase in their rates of only 7.5 percent, though even official figures concede that prices during the war have scooted up 33 percent.

Job Picture Less Serious Than Expected On V-J Day

Washington, D. C.—A. F. Hinrichs, Acting Commissioner of Labor Statistics, said that unemployment is far less serious than was expected before V-J Day, but that production in many lines is picking up "only slowly."

Expansion in 1946, he declared, would be stimulated by construction mainly of residential building and by increases in business investment and in the flow of consumer durable goods.

Delays in reconversion he ascribed chiefly to business caution, saying that neither strikes nor lack of interest in current sales on the part of business men subject to excess profit taxes in 1945 operated as more than minor factors.

Other points in the survey were:

1—New jobs will develop somewhat more slowly than men are demobilized.

2—It is almost certain that unemployment in the spring will not even approximate the 8,000,00 figure that "is still frequently quoted."

3—Employment in the durable goods industries was much better sustained after V-J Day than anyone had any right to hope it would be.

4—Labor turnover figures indicate that workers are not afraid to quit a job.

5—There are comparatively few centers in which unemployment is a serious problem today.

6—There is no evidence of a general surplus of workers, the pickup of employment being discouragingly small in industries like textiles, apparel, boots and shoes and the building materials industry, earning opportunities in these industries being unattractive to workers laid off from munitions factories.

Longshoremen Win Big Pay Increase In Arbitration Award by W. H. Davis

New York City.—A 20 percent increase in the rate of pay, to $1.50 an hour, was granted to the longshoremen of this port by William H. Davis, arbitrator named by Secretary of Labor Lewis B. Schwellenbach to break the bargaining deadlock between the International Longshoremen's Association and the New York Shipping Association.

The award is binding on the ship owners and stevedoring companies and upon the members of ILA locals of the American Federation of Labor, including 35,000 longshoremen, 3,500 checkers and clerks and 400 cargo repair men.

Other features of the award are the reduction from 44 to 40 hours of the period beyond which pay will be at time and a half; reduction of the number of shape-ups, or hiring sessions, from 3 daily to 2, a gain for the workers; one week's vacation with pay, an innovation; and rejection of the union's request for larger work gangs with assignment of specific duties for each man.

The award was hailed with satisfaction by Joseph P. Ryan, ILA president.

Mr. Davis, former Director of Economic Stabilization and former chairman of the War Labor Board, offered the following explanation of his grant of a 20 percent basic wage increase:

"The hourly wage rates are relatively high, but this is a reflection of the casual nature of the employment. The evidence before me shows that a longshoreman, in normal times, is out of a job at least one-third of the time, on the average."

Arbitration hearings have been going on since Nov. 14. The new contract is to be retroactive to Oct. 1, and will carry over to Oct. 1, 1947.

Mr. Ryan, who said the award would "gladden the hearts of the 30,000 longshore workers and their families in this port," as well as of ILA members "throughout the land," asserted that it provided full vindication of his policies.

McCarran Seeks Action On Proposal For 30-Hour Week In Gov't Service

Washington, D. C.—Senator McCarran of Nevada, said he intends to press for a complete congressional study of proposed 30-hour-week legislation for government employes after Congress returns to Washington.

McCarran's, proposed bill, introduced in early September, would retain the five-day work week now in force in the government service, but it would cut the working day from 8 to 6 hours.

Although aimed specifically at Civil Service personnel, its real goal is to provide a precedent for industry in general to cut working hours so as to open up more jobs when and if unemployment looms as a national problem. Labor organizations have widely endorsed it.

"Right now, of course, there is no great demand for a general 30-hour work week in view of the fact that the country still lacks manpower to fill all available jobs. But the time is coming when this will be the only course we can take, and for that reason I want Congress to have obtained all possible information on the subject," the Senator said.

McCarran said he had been promised hearings by Senator Downey of California, chairman of the Civil Service Committee to which his bill was referred, and adds he feels sessions should be held "from time to time" during the year.

GREEN ASKS OBSERVANCE OF BROTHERHOOD WEEK

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green called on affiliated organizations to participate in the nation-wide observance of Brotherhood Week, Feb. 17-24.

The final demonstration of the democratic forces in America against racial and religious prejudices is sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews and supported by the nation's leaders, from President Truman down. In a letter giving official commendation to Brotherhood Week, President Truman said:

"The good world of the future must be built on the foundation of the recognition of the dignity and rights of each individual, regardless his race, creed or national background."

CALIFORNIA LABOR SCHOOL OPENS NEW SESSIONS

San Francisco—With the new spring term beginning Jan. 7, the California Labor School, sponsored by AFL, CIO and rail unions, is offering a fulltime veterans educational program.

At the request of veterans who wished to be informed on the labor movement, courses have been created in union organization and administration, social sciences, writing, public relations and industrial arts.

GLASS BOTTLE BLOWERS WIN SWEEPING VICTORIES

Philadelphia—The AFL Glass Bottle Blowers Association announced overwhelming victories in National Labor Relations Board elections among employes of three plants of the Thatcher Manufacturing Co., located in Elmira and Olean, N. Y., and Streator, Ill.

With District 50 of the United Mine Workers on the ballot as the rival union, the Glass Bottle Blowers triumphed by a total vote of 1,020 to 256.

AFL RADIO FORUM HITS FACT-FINDING PROPOSAL

Washington, D. C.—The AFL inaugurated its 1946 radio forum series over NBC's "America United" program with a highly interesting and informative discussion on "How Can Labor-Management Relations Be Improved?"

Representatives of the AFL, U. S. Chamber of Commerce and National Farmers Union agreed that the President's fact-finding proposal won't do the trick, nor will any other new legislation by Congress to regulate labor-management relations. They came to the conclusion that the only real solution is sincere collective bargaining and an effort by labor and management leaders to come together on basic policies.

Robert J. Watt spoke for the AFL, Thomas W. Howard for the Chamber of Commerce, and Russell Smith for the National Farmers Union.

AFL Settles Film Job Controversy

Washington, D. C.—A special committee of the American Federation of Labor set up detailed jurisdiction boundaries for its various unions in Hollywood movie studios, in a decision ending a long controversy.

The committee, consisting of Felix H. Knight of the Brotherhood of Railroad Carmen, W. C. Birthright of the Barbers Union, and W. C. Doherty of the Letter Carriers, was delegated by the AFL Executive Council to make a final settlement of the 7-month dispute.

Unions involved are the Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers; Electricians; Plumbers; and Steam Fitters; Building Service Employes; Machinists; the Carpenters, and the Theatrical Stage Employes and Moving Picture Machine Operators.

The special committee said that it unanimously agreed that the best solution to the controversy would be "a division of work assignments within the industry patterned after previous agreements negotiated mutually by the various crafts."

Each jurisdictional question was decided by the committee according to this policy after extended hearings and after personal inspection at a Hollywood studio of the various types of work involved. The decisions are final and binding on all parties.

Farm Prosperity Hinges On Wages

Washington, D. C.—The American farmer starts the New Year leaving behind him the most prosperous 12 months in history. His gross income for 1945 hit $24,200,000,000, according to the United States Department of Agriculture.

Why were farmers unusually prosperous last year? Because, Secretary of Agriculture Anderson emphasizes, industrial and factory workers generally were fully employed and earning higher than ordinary wages.

"The city worker had plenty of food dollars to spend," Anderson says, "and they spent those dollars right over the farmer's counter.

"They spent nearly $100 billion dollars for food, a third of their entire consumer outlay.

"Contrast that with 1933, when consumers had only 11½ billion food dollars, and after the middleman took his toll there was mighty little left for the farmer."

The surest safeguard against another crash for agriculture, Anderson says, is full production and full employment, "with lots of food dollars going into pay checks."

GREEN URGES ALL MEMBERS TO MAINTAIN BOND PLANS

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green issued an appeal to all AFL workers to continue purchasing Victory Bonds under the payroll savings plan.

Mr. Green said in a letter to all affiliated unions that he had discussed the matter with Secretary of the Treasur. Vinson who expressed the hope that AFL members will not abandon payroll savings plans in peacetime.

Secretary Vinson praised the leading part which AFL officers and members played in the successful outcome of the Treasury's War Finance program.

Truman Asks American People To Pour Heat On Congress

Appeals For Support of Liberal Legislative Program

Washington, D. C.—Taking a leaf from labor's book, President Truman in a nationwide radio address appealed to the American people to put the heat on their members of Congress to break the log jam blocking progressive legislation for the protection of human needs.

The President's language was temperate but the sum total of his indictment against Congress severe.

He emphasized that he proposed a whole series of vital and progressive laws—such as full employment, unemployment compensation, minimum wages and health insurance—and added:

"But Congress has done little—very little—about them."

Finding his program blocked and stultified at every turn, the President turned to the people for support. He said:

"The members of the Congress are now at home. During this period they will have the benefit of close contact with you—the people whom they serve.

"From personal experience, I know that contact with the people back home helps every public servant. I urge you to tell your public servants your own views concerning the grave problems facing our country. In a free country the voice of the people must be heard.

"I fully appreciate the many problems which Congressmen face. They have done a great wartime job under most trying conditions. The complicated return to peacetime has increased their difficulties.

"I seek no conflict with the Congress. I earnestly desire cooperation with the Congress. Orderly procedure in the Congress is indispensable to the democratic process. But orderly procedure does not mean needless delay.

"Stable world relationships require full production and full employment in the United States.

"There are voices of defeat, dismay, timidity among us who say we cannot do it. These I challenge. They will not guide us to success, these men of little faith.

"We cannot shirk leadership in the postwar world. The problems of our economy will not be solved by timid men, mistrustful of each other. We cannot face 1946 in a spirit of drift or irresolution.

"The men and women who made this country great and kept it free were plain people with courage and faith.

"Let us justify this heritage."

AFL leaders expressed agreement with every point in President Truman's program but one—and that was his recommendation for the appointment of government fact-finding boards to deal with labor disputes during compulsory cooling-off periods.

"This cure is worse than the disease," AFL President William Green said, reiterating labor's specific objections to this measure as embodied in the Norton-Ellender bill.

The White House announced the President had received more than 500 telegrams in response to the radio message, 80 percent of them favorable. Congressional mail was reported to have jumped only 10 percent. This somewhat disappointing response was tempered by the fact that most Congressmen were home and their constituents may have had opportunities to contact them personally.

Reports circulated in Washington that the President originally included sharp and specific criticisms in his speech of the CIO and some of the large corporations with which it is now engaged in disputes. Such references were toned down in the final version. The President charged that "some" of the promises of teamwork given to him by labor and management after V-J Day had not been kept and again, in speaking of factfinding, he declared the purpose of his recommendation "have been misrepresented by some of the spokesmen for labor and management."

AFL leaders derived chief comfort from the following paragraph in the address:

"I have indicated my opposition, and I repeat it now, to the antilabor bills pending in the Congress which seek to deprive labor of the right to bargain collectively, or which seek to deprive a union of its ultimate right to strike."

FLU WINS FIRST ELECTION

Philadelphia—A newly organized federal labor union, Gas Meter Workers Union No. 20,404, won collective bargaining rights for the employes of the American Meter Co. here by a vote of 115 to 12 in an N.L.R.B. election.

Green Backs Truman On Drive For Liberal Laws

Washington, D. C.—President William Green of the American Federation of Labor issued the following statement on President Truman's radio address:

"The American Federation of Labor heartily endorses the President's demands for legislation to protect human needs during reconversion. We believe that the failure of Congress to enact adequate full employment, unemployment compensation, minimum wage, housing and health insurance legislation, has contributed in large measure to industrial unrest. We join President Truman in appealing to the American people to urge their representatives in Congress to vote for these measures.

"But we do not agree with the President's recommendation for compulsory cooling-off and fact-finding machinery to deal with labor-management disputes. We consider this cure worse than the disease.

"This legislation would be unworkable and dangerous. It would make wage-fixing a permanent government policy, it would subject labor and management to control by government boards, it would nullify the safeguards of the Norris-LaGuardia Act by reviving court injunctions against labor and it would subject labor unions once more to the vicious doctrine of conspiracy.

"It is not accurate to say that collective bargaining and voluntary arbitration have broken down in major industries such as automobiles and steel. The plain facts are that real collective bargaining and voluntary arbitration have never been put into practice in these industries."

New York Anti-Discrimination Law Is Reported Working Successfully

New York City—Henry C. Turner, chairman of the State Commission Against Discrimination, declared that the anti-bias law was a success and is achieving the purposes for which it was designed.

Summing up the first six months of its operation since it became effective July 1, he said that discrimination in employment throughout the state on the ground of race, creed, color or national origin had decreased appreciably and that so persuasive has been the mere presence of the law on the books that only 180 cases of alleged bias had been brought to the attention of the commission in the first six months of its life.

Although the law provides a maximum $500 fine and a year's imprisonment for recalcitrant offenders, in not one of these cases, said Mr. Turner, had the commission been compelled to resort to even a formal hearing to obtain correction of protested discriminatory practices. Of the 180 cases, he said, 140 were settled by friendly conferences and 47 are in process of settlement. Two are under investigation.

The largest single block of complaints, roughly 40 percent, the chairman explained, were based on discrimination because of color, with the next largest group based on creed and the third on national origin.

"There is no doubt that the antidiscrimination law is working," asserted Mr. Turner. "The commission is of the opinion that the economic and social problems which result from discriminatory practices in employment due to race, creed, color or country of national origin can be adequately solved by the present New York law.

"There has been a lessening of hostility. The expected flood of complaints happily failed to materialize. Concerns are changing their personnel policies without pressure from the commission."

Record-Breaking Profits In 1946 Forecast By OPA For Industry

Washington, D. C.—This is going to be a banner year for profits, the Office of Price Administration predicted. With gross profits taxes repealed, industry should earn its greatest profits in history, the federal agency said.

This statement is especially significant because American business made profit history in the last two years and earnings are still going up.

The figures for 1945 are not yet available, but they were greater than in 1944, a "fantastic" profit year.

American wage earners would be interested in examining the profit figures for 1944, as revealed in a statement filed by the OPA with the Senate Small Business Committee. Profit increases in 1944 over the 1936-39 period, which was unprofitable, include:

Hardware retailers, 464 percent; small furniture stores, 185 percent; variety chain stores, 239 percent; men's apparel stores, 208 percent; department and specialty stores, 1,324 percent; chain grocery stores, 152 percent; music stores, 210 percent; automobile dealers, 90 percent.

So much for retailers. These increases in profits show how well the wholesalers also fared:

Hardware wholesalers, 179 percent; dry goods, 639 percent; grocery 25 percent.

Of course, the distribution end of business, on the whole, took a back seat to the manufacturing end, as these profit increases emphasize:

All manufacturing, 450 percent; textile and leather, 730 percent; transportation equipment, 650 percent; metals and products, 500 percent; building materials, 270 percent; chemicals, 230 percent; food, beverages and tobacco, 200 percent.

AFL Western Union Workers Accept Substantial Pay Award From WLB

Washington, D. C.—More than 50,000 Western Union employes organized in the AFL Union voted overwhelmingly to cancel a scheduled strike after the National War Labor Board voted a 12 cents hourly increase in pay plus many other important gains.

Not the least of these was a retroactive provision in the award which means more than two years of back pay for the workers. The total amount of back pay to be divided among the AFL Western Union workers is estimated at about 25 million dollars.

This will amount to individual pay ranging from $400 up.

The only CIO local in Western Union, representing the New York area, received somewhat less in the WLB decision, and threatened to strike.

The AFL Commercial Telegraphers Union, and several AFL Federal Labor unions in the Western Union setup agreed in advance with the company to abide by the WLB decision. The refusal of the CIO union to go along was blasted by the company in newspaper advertisements as indicating that its signature to an agreement was worthless.

Several months ago the National War Labor Board had given Western Union workers only 4 cents an hour increase. The new award resulted from the AFL union's appeal for reconsideration. It was regarded by the AFL as "sufficiently responsive to the merits of the case."

THE AFL PRESENTS . . . "AMERICA UNITED" At 1:15 P.M., EWT, Over NBC

Date	Topic	Panel Members
Jan. 13	Prospects for World Peace	Robert J. Watt, AFL Fred Bailey, National Grange Kenneth H. Campbell, U. S. Chamber of Commerce
Jan. 20	Problems of Government Workers	James B. Burns, AFL U. S. Senator Meade Raymond, American Farm Bureau Federation
Jan. 27	America's Housing Emergency	Boris Shishkin, AFL William Wyatt, Housing Expediter F. R. Fitzpatrick, U. S. Chamber of Commerce
Feb. 3	Need for Health Insurance	Nelson Cruikshank, AFL Rep. Dingell, of Michigan Russell Smith, National Farmers Union